

# Kanakanabu language

**Kanakanavu** (also spelled **Kanakanabu**) is a Southern Tsouic language spoken by the Kanakanavu people, an indigenous people of Taiwan (see Taiwanese aborigines). It is a Formosan language of the Austronesian family.

The Kanakanavu live in the two villages of Manga and Takanua in Namasia District (formerly Sanmin Township), Kaohsiung.<sup>[4]</sup>

The language is considered to be moribund.<sup>[5]</sup>

|                        |
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| Kanakanavu             |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Native to</b>       | Taiwan  |
| <b>Region</b>          | Maya Village, Namasia District, Kaohsiung City  |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>       | 250 (no date) <sup>[1]</sup>  |
| <b>Native speakers</b> | 4 (2012) <sup>[2]</sup>   |
| <b>Language family</b> | Austronesian <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tsouic ?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Saaroa–Kanakanabu<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Kanakanavu</b></li></ul></li></ul></li></ul> |
| Language codes         |   |
| <b>ISO 639-3</b>       | xnb   |
| <b>Glottolog</b>       | kana1286 ( <span>http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/kana1286</span> ) <sup>[3]</sup>   |

## History

The native Kanakanavu speakers were Taiwanese aboriginals living on the islands. Following the Dutch Colonial Period in the 17th century, Han-Chinese immigration began to dominate the islands population. The village of Takanua is a village assembled by Japanese rulers to relocate various aboriginal groups in order to establish easier dominion over these groups.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Description

There are 14 different consonant phonemes, containing only voiceless plosives within Kanakanavu. Adequate descriptions of liquid consonants become a challenge within Kanakanavu. It also contains 6 vowels plus diphthongs and triphthongs. Vowel length is often not clear if distinctive or not, as well as speakers pronouncing vowel phonemes with variance. As most Austronesian and Formosan languages, Kanakanavu has the syllable structure **C V**. Very few, even simple words, contain less than three to four syllables.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Alphabet

A, C, E, I, K, L, M, N, Ng, O, P, R, S, T, U, **ʘ**, V, ' /?



**C** represents the phoneme /c/.

**L** represents the phonemes /d/ and /ɽ/.

**P** represents both /b/ and /p/.

/ɬ/ is spelled as **hl**.

## Phonology

### Consonants

Kanakanabu consonants

|                    | <u>Labial</u> | <u>Dental</u> | <u>Alveolar</u> | <u>Retroflex</u> | <u>Palatal</u> | <u>Velar</u> | <u>Glottal</u> |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| <u>Nasal</u>       | m             |               | n               |                  |                | ŋ ⟨ng⟩       |                |
| <u>Stop</u>        | p b ⟨p⟩       |               | t               | ɖ ⟨l⟩            | c              | k            | ʔ ⟨'⟩          |
| <u>Affricate</u>   |               |               |                 |                  |                |              |                |
| <u>Fricative</u>   | f v           |               | s z             |                  |                |              | h              |
| <u>Rhotic</u>      |               |               | ɽ               |                  |                |              |                |
| <u>Approximant</u> | w             |               | ɬ ⟨hl⟩          | ɭ                | j ⟨y⟩          |              |                |

### Vowels

Front: i, e, a

Central: ʉ, e/ə

Back: u, o

## References

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4. Zeitoun & Teng (2014), abstract (<http://iscll-14.ling.sinica.edu.tw/files-pdf/Papers/Session6/ZeitounTeng.pdf>).
5. "Did you know Kanakanabu is critically endangered? (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2016, from <http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/3236>" (<http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/3236>). Endangeredlanguages.com. Retrieved 2019-05-08. External link in |title= (help)
6. "Archived copy" ([https://web.archive.org/web/20160920061449/https://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/Vgl\\_SW/kanakanavu/language-description/setting-of-language/ethnographic-situation.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20160920061449/https://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/Vgl_SW/kanakanavu/language-description/setting-of-language/ethnographic-situation.html)). Archived from the original ([https://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/Vgl\\_SW/kanakanavu/language-description/setting-of-language/ethnographic-situation.html](https://www2.uni-erfurt.de/sprachwissenschaft/Vgl_SW/kanakanavu/language-description/setting-of-language/ethnographic-situation.html)) on 2016-09-20. Retrieved 2016-09-15.



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## Further reading

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## External links

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- [Endangered Languages \(http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/3236\)](http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/3236)
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